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WORLD RECORD-BREAKING COMIC!

SPAWN

SPAWN'S UNIVERSE 92 24

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TODD McFARLANE

PREVIOUSLY IN *SPAWN*

Spawn has arrived and the final battle for the fate of the throne has begun. Who will take the throne and become the new monarch of Hell?

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The INFERNAL KEEP.
Now.
SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME, THE THRONE OF HELL HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL OBJECTS IN THE UNIVERSE.
IN ORDER TO CLAIM IT, TO WIELD ITS EXTRAORDINARY POWER, ONE MUST EITHER BE A CREATURE OF HELL...
...OR ONE WHO'S BEEN MARKED BY IT.

ACROSS THE REALM, AND FURTHER AFIELD, OTHERS WAIT WITH BATED BREATH TO SEE WHO'LL EMERGE AS HELL'S **NEW** RULER.
CHIEF AMONGST THEM IS WANDA FITZGERALD. SPAWN'S FORMER WIFE.
AFTER ESCAPING FROM HEAVEN, SHE TRAVELED TO HELL, HOPING TO HELP SPAWN ON HIS PATH TO **'THE INFERNAL KEEP.'**
HER ROLE FULFILLED, SHE WATCHES FROM THE SIDELINES NOW, HOPING SHE'S DONE ENOUGH TO TURN THE TIDE.
AND EVERY SECOND SHE REMAINS IN HELL CAUSES HER EXCRUCIATING PAIN BUT SHE KNOWS LEAVING WOULD BE POINTLESS...

BECAUSE IF SPAWN FAILS HIS MISSION, THEN NOWHERE IN CREATION WILL BE SAFE TO EXIST.
FIND SINN!
WE NEED EYES ON HIM. NOW!
THE REST OF THIS IS JUST A DISTRACTION.
THEY'RE INSIDE THE KEEP ALREADY, JESSICA.
THEN, WE NEED TO MOVE!
I DID A SWEEP. THERE'S NO SIGN OF HIM, SPAWN OR CLOWN.
REDEEMER, GATHER WHO-EVER YOU...
FWASHH

FWOOM
DOES THAT MEAN--
YES. WE'RE TOO LATE.
HELL HAS A NEW KING.

TEN
MINUTES EARLIER.
SINN HAS BREACHED THE INNER WALL
AS HE CLOSES IN ON HIS CHERISHED PRIZE HELL'S THRONE
GET REINFORCEMENTS DOWN HERE!
SINN, THOUGH, EASILY DISPOSES OF THOSE IN HIS WAY
CREEAKK

CLOWN?
OF COURSE, YOU'RE HERE. YOU'VE ALWAYS *DELUDED* YOURSELF THAT YOU COULD DO MORE THAN YOU WERE *CAPABLE* OF. I'M SURPRISED YOU CAUGHT UP SO SOON.
THEN BLAME YOUR-SELF.
YOU SEE, WHILE YOU AND CATACLYSM WERE HAVING YOUR LITTLE SQUABBLING, I DID SOMETHING NONE OF HELL'S RULERS EVER HAS.
I BEAT *HEAVEN.*
GOD'S SHINING CITY, I SET IT AFLAME. IT WAS *GLORIOUS!* AND ONCE I'M DONE HERE, ONCE I TAKE THE THRONE...
I'M GOING BACK TO TURN IT INTO THE *FIRST CONQUEST* OF MY NEW EMPIRE!

MILLENNIA AGO, WHEN MANKIND WAS STILL YOUNG, CLOWN MADE A PROMISE TO SINN
THAT AS LONG AS HE LIVED, NO HELLSPAWN WOULD EVER SIT UPON HELL'S THRONE INCLUDING SINN
THE HATRED THESE TWO HAVE SHARED FOR EACH OTHER IS UNIQUE
IT'S OUTLIVED ENTIRE CIVILIZATIONS
BUT TODAY, AT LONG LAST

...THEIR FEUD WILL FINALLY END!
THOOM
HOW SAD.
AFTER ALL THAT WORK AND ALL YOUR EFFORTS...
ONLY TO FAIL AT THE FINAL STEP.
HIGH ABOVE THEM, UNNOTICED BY EITHER VILLAIN, A SILENT OBSERVER IS PART OF THIS FRAY.

THE ROTTING SKULL OF MALEBOLGIA, THEIR FORMER MASTER, STILL WATCHES OVER THEIR RIVALRY AS HE DID FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.
WHILE SEVERAL HAVE TRIED TO CLAIM THE TITLE SINCE, TO MANY HE WAS THE LAST TRUE KING OF HELL.
HIS DEATH BEING THE SPARK THAT STARTED THIS CRISIS
HOW IT WOULD HAVE DELIGHTED HIM TO SEE THE AMOUNT OF CHAOS AND DESTRUCTION THAT HAS FLOWED SINCE THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH
BAM
BAM

THE WEAPON SPAWN WIELDS WAS FORGED DEEP IN HEAVEN'S CELESTIAL FURNACE
THE PRODUCT OF COUNTLESS EXPERIMENTATIONS ON CAPTURED SOLDIERS FROM HELL
DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO ELIMINATE A NECROPLASM POWERED HELLSPAWN WITH A SINGLE LETHAL SHOT
THE ONLY PROBLEM FOR SPAWN

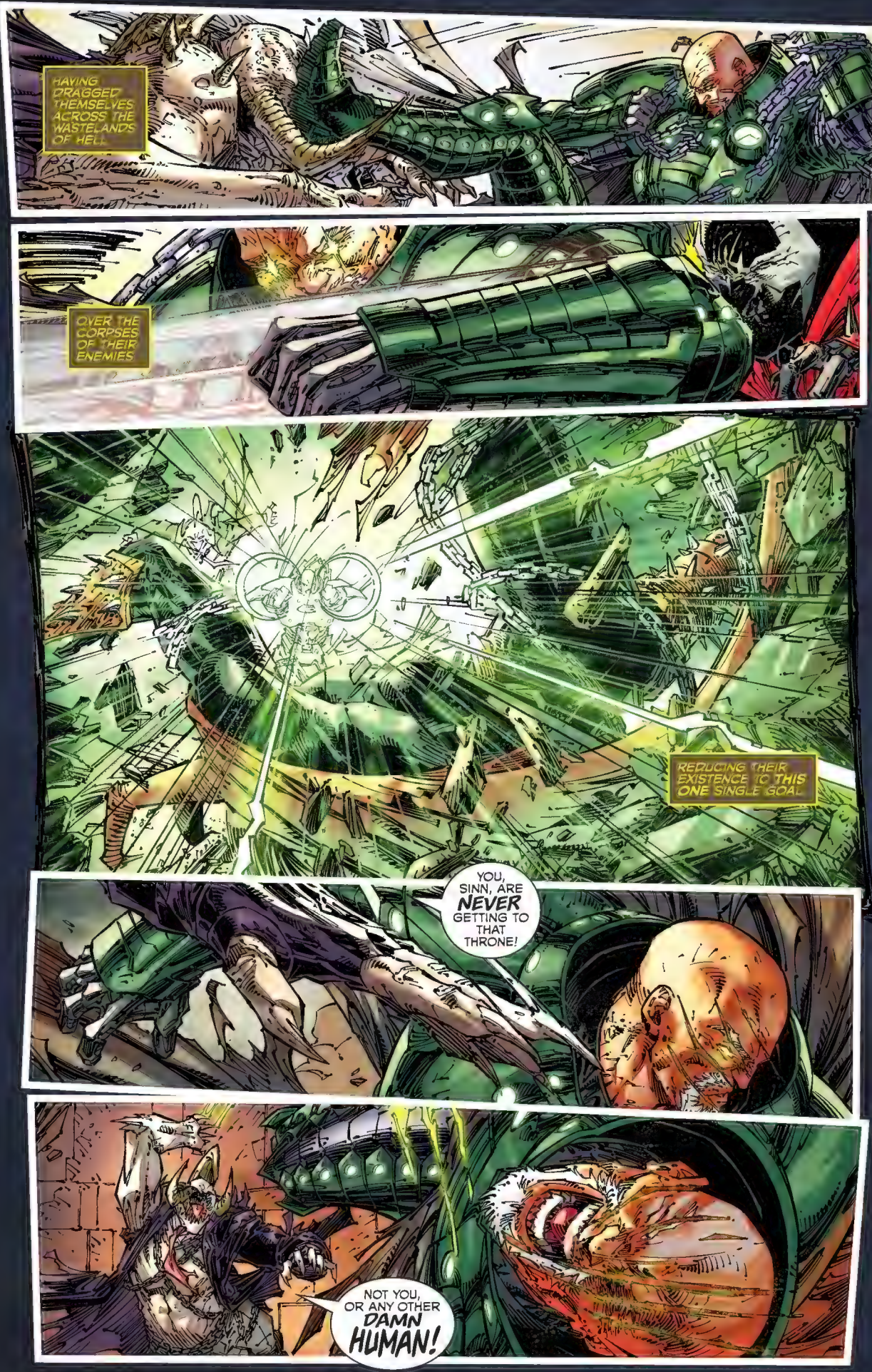
... IS THAT SINN HAS THE POWER OF AN ARMY OF HELLSPAWNS COURSING THROUGH HIM
WAS THAT IT, SIMMONS?
YOU'VE HAD ALL THIS TIME TO PREPARE AND THAT WAS THE BEST YOU COULD DO?
I'LL GIVE YOU CREDIT FOR GETTING EVEN THIS FAR, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO DO BETTER THAN THAT IF YOU PLAN ON WALKING OUT OF HERE.
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT WON'T BE LEAVING.

BEFORE SINN LEFT CAMP THIS MORNING, ONE OF HIS LIEUTENANTS FOOLISHLY REMARKED THAT **DESTINY** HAD BROUGHT THEM TO THIS MOMENT.

FOR THESE THREE BEHEMOTHS, DESTINY HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. THOUGH

THEY HAVE **BROUGHT THEMSELVES** TO THIS POINT.

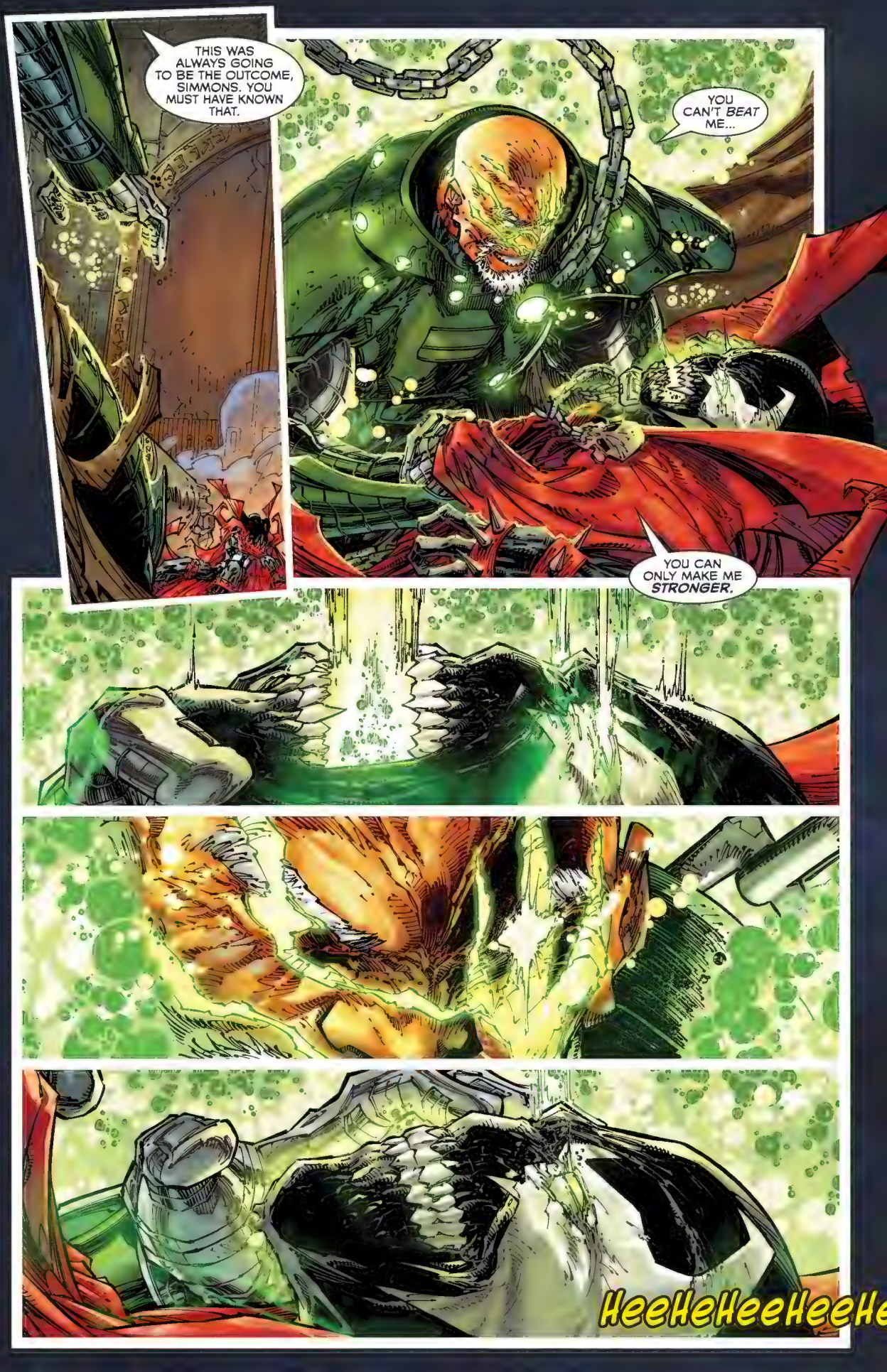
EACH OBSESSED WITH ACHIEVING THEIR ULTIMATE GOAL — TO **STOP** THEIR ENEMIES POWER-GRAB BY ACQUIRING HELL'S ULTIMATE **PINNACLE**!


HAVING DRAGGED THEMSELVES ACROSS THE WASTELANDS OF HELL
OVER THE CORPSES OF THEIR ENEMIES
REDUCING THEIR EXISTENCE TO THIS ONE SINGLE GOAL
YOU, SINN, ARE NEVER GETTING TO THAT THRONE!
NOT YOU, OR ANY OTHER DAMN HUMAN!

THERE'S A REASON YOU NEVER RULED HELL, CLOWN.
YOU'RE TRAPPED IN THE PAST.
A HUMAN WILL SIT UPON THAT THRONE-- EITHER MYSELF OR SIMMONS.
BUT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL I ALLOW IT TO BE YOU. YOU AREN'T BUILT TO HANDLE ITS POWER.
THAT'S A REASON YOUR MASTER NEVER PUT THE SYMBIOTE ON ONE OF HIS OWN. HE KNEW-- KNEW A HELL-BORN WAS INCAPABLE OF BEING A MASTER!
OR HOW TO GO BEYOND THAT.
YOU SEE...

I'M A GOD NOW!
STAY DOWN, SIMMONS. THERE'S NO NEED TO DIE TODAY.
SPAWN'S CHAINS SNAP
VERY WELL.
TIME TO PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY.

KRAK
SHUP
BOOM


THIS WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE THE OUTCOME, SIMMONS. YOU MUST HAVE KNOWN THAT.
YOU CAN'T BEAT ME...
YOU CAN ONLY MAKE ME STRONGER.
HeeHeHeeHeeHe

WHAT?!
NO!!

FIVE
MINUTES AGO.
YOU CAN'T DO THIS.
I DON'T CARE WHAT I HAVE TO DO, YOU CAN'T TAKE THE THRONE.
I KNOW. THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE.
IT'S YOU.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO TAKE IT.

I DON'T WANT IT.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT WE WANT ANYMORE.
IN THE NEXT FEW MINUTES, SOMEONE'S TAKING IT. UNLESS YOU STEP UP. IT CAN'T BE ANY OF THE REST OF US.
AND WHOEVER SITS ON IT, THEIR POWERS MULTIPLY. I CAN'T BE TRUSTED WITH THAT KIND OF POWER...
AL, LISTEN, YOU CAN'T DO THIS.
I KNOW YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING THE RIGHT THING BUT THAT THRONE, IT'LL TURN YOU INTO SOMETHING YOU DON'T WANT TO BECOME. IT CORRUPTS EVERYTHING.
THERE HAS TO BE SOMEONE ELSE.
...IT NEEDS TO BE YOU. YOU UNDERSTAND THIS WORLD MORE THAN ANY OF THE OTHERS. AND YOU'D HAVE THE BEST CHANCE OF RESISTING THE THRONE'S INFLUENCE.
AL, EVEN IF I WANTED TO, I CAN'T. I'M NOT FROM HELL--
YOU CAN!

IT WAS LONG AGO BUT YOU STILL BEAR THAT MARK FROM YOUR TIME BEING A SPAWN.
I KNOW I DON'T HAVE ANY RIGHT TO ASK THIS, NOT AFTER EVERYTHING BUT...
KRAKOOM
IT'S SINN AND CLOWN. THEY'LL BE HERE ANY SECOND.
I'LL MEET THEM, BUT YOU NEED TO DECIDE SOON.
ANYONE MARKED BY HELL CAN TAKE IT, NYX.
AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH--I'M SORRY. FOR ALL OF THIS.

How did it come to this?
For a moment, Nyx considers leaving.
Because she doesn't know.
If she can make that kind of sacrifice

Now

BUT IN THE END
SHE DID.
THIS WAR IS OVER.
HELL IS UNDER MY CONTROL, NOW!

AND YOU HAVE MUCH TO ANSWER FOR, SINN..
YOU DARE?
ON YOUR FEET, SIMMONS.
IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME TO THIS.
WE COULD'VE WORKED TOGETHER. COULD'VE FOUND ANOTHER SOLUTION.
BUT NO ONE TELLS THE GREAT SPAWN WHAT TO DO, RIGHT?

"EXCEPT IT'S THE REST OF US WHO MUST BEAR THE COST OF YOUR PRIDE.
"OF YOUR ARROGANCE
"OF YOUR MISTAKES
"WHEN DID YOU BECOME LIKE THEM?"

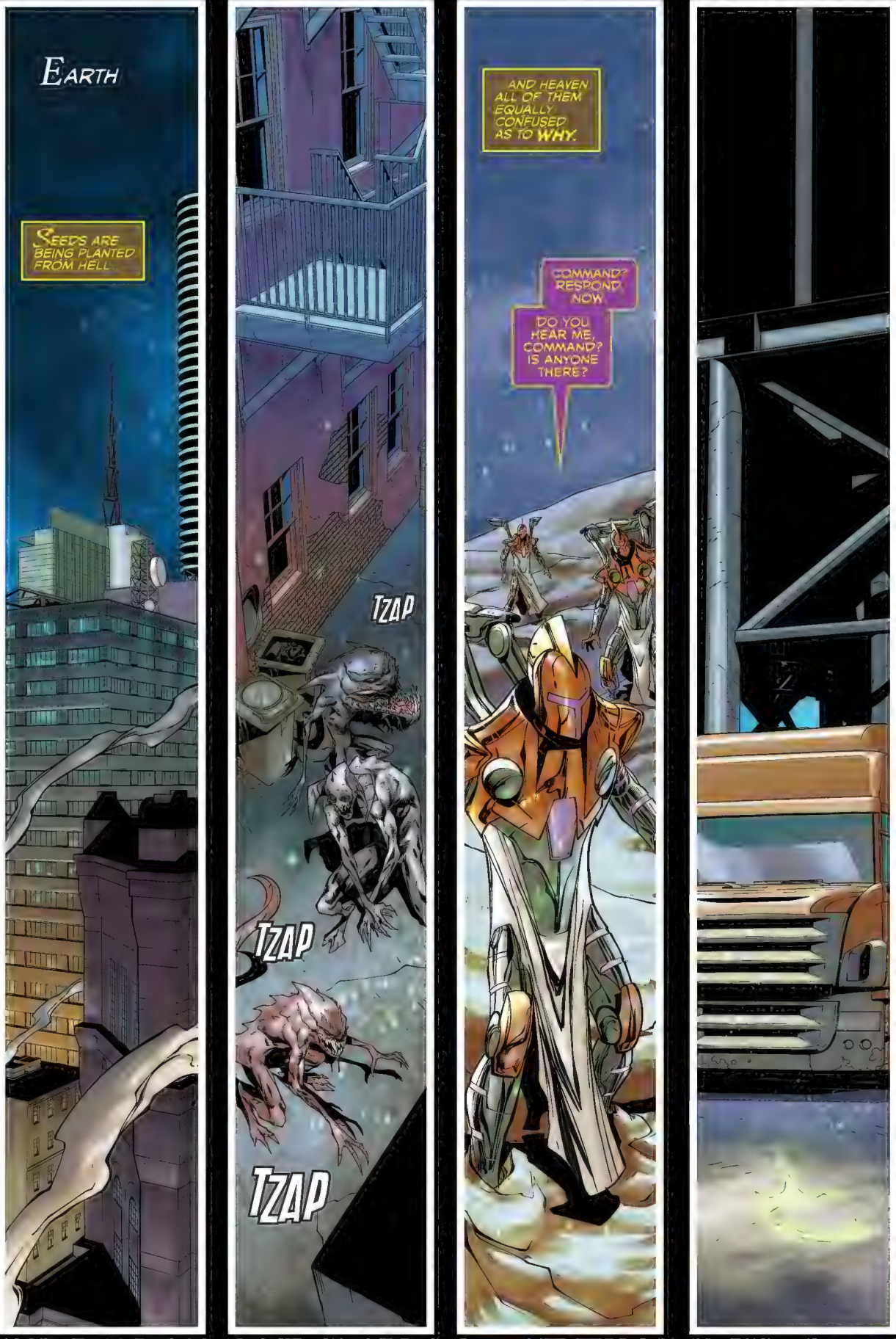
"I DON'T KNOW WHY IT HAPPENED BUT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE, YOU LOST YOUR WAY.
"YOU NEED TO CHANGE THAT AND SOON.
"BECAUSE I CAN SEE FAR BEYOND ALL OF THIS NOW...
"...AND YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S COMING FOR YOU!"

NOW *LEAVE* MY SIGHT. YOU'RE NO LONGER WELCOME IN HELL. NOT ANYMORE.
NYX, WAIT! IF WE'VE MADE A MISTAKE, WE...
GOODBYE, AL.
BRAVO, MY MAJESTY, OUR QUEEN OF HELL.

IF I MAY?
I'M ALZAFONT, CHIEF CUSTODIAN OF THE INFERNAL KEEP.
ALLOW ME TO BE THE FIRST, OF MANY, TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR ACCESSION.
SPARE ME YOUR GROVELING.
INSTEAD, BRING ME A LIST OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR A NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL.
IS THAT WISE, YOUR HIGHNESS?
THIS WAR SPLIT THE LOYALTIES OF MANY FACTIONS.
I WON'T REPEAT MYSELF.
AS YOU WILL, MY QUEEN.

GOOD.
BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS ABOUT TO CHANGE, ON EARTH...

Epilogue...


EARTH
SEEDS ARE BEING PLANTED FROM HELL
TZAP
TZAP
TZAP
AND HEAVEN ALL OF THEM EQUALLY CONFUSED AS TO WHY.
COMMAND? RESPOND NOW.
DO YOU HEAR ME, COMMAND? IS ANYONE THERE?

IZAP

--WANDA?!

WHAT HAVE I DONE?
AL?
IF YOU'RE HERE--AFTER EVERYTHING--DOES THAT MEAN WE'VE LOST?
I DON'T THINK WE'LL KNOW THAT FOR A WHILE.
I LET NYX TAKE THE THRONE.
NYX?
SHE'S PART OF 'GREENWORLD.' YOU REMEMBER THAT PART, RIGHT?
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER. WHEN YOU LEFT HELL, DID YOU SEE ANYONE ELSE VANISHING?
YEAH, I MEAN THERE WERE HUNDREDS. DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY WENT THOUGH. YOU'RE THE FIRST I'VE SEEN.
WHY?
WANDA WAS WITH ME IN HELL. HER SOUL WAS SENT THERE BY HEAVEN BUT I COULD SEE SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING TO HER.
I THINK IT HAPPENED TO ALL OF US.

BEHIND THEM, THEY HEAR A SHARP HISS AND THE LABORED BREATHING OF CREATURES TRYING TO ADJUST TO EARTH'S OXYGEN.
SPAWN REACTS INSTANTLY
EXCEPT, NOTHING HAPPENS. HIS POWERS APPEAR TO BE GONE!
WHY? HE'S NOWHERE NEAR A "DEAD ZONE."

BUT SOON HE REALIZES THE IMPACT OF HIS ENEMY'S BLOWS AREN'T AS SEVERE, EITHER.
MEANING HIS OPPONENTS SEEM ALSO TO HAVE LOST THEIR POWERS.
AND THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING!
SOMETHING'S WRONG. CHECK YOUR POWERS. DO THEY WORK?
THEY DON'T.

THEY'LL DEAL WITH THAT LATER. THERE'S STILL TWO CREATURES STANDING.
CRACK
CRACK
OKAY.
NOW, WHAT THE F*CK IS GOING ON?

OUR COSTUMES ARE ACTING LIKE WE'RE INSIDE A DEAD ZONE... BUT WE'RE NOT EVEN CLOSE TO ONE.
I HAD MY POWERS IN HELL. I'LL ASSUME YOU DID TOO, BUT TRANSPORTING OUT OF THERE TRIGGERED SOME-THING.
THEY'VE SHUT DOWN.
IF THAT'S TRUE, WE NEED TO FIND OUT HOW WIDESPREAD IT IS.
clix
REDEEMER, ARE YOU THERE?
I AM. MONOLITH IS WITH ME.
WHERE ARE YOU?
THE HIMALAYAS. WE MATERIALIZED HERE A FEW MINUTES AGO, BUT SOMETHING STRANGE IS GOING ON. NEITHER OF US HAS OUR POWERS.
WE'VE GOT A SIMILAR ISSUE HERE. WHEN WE FIGURE THIS OUT, WE'LL MEET UP. FOR NOW, STAY LOW.
DID YOU HEAR? IT'S THEM, TOO! NYX DID SOMETHING TO US!
WE DON'T KNOW HER INTENT YET, WE'LL NEED MORE INFO.

Heeheeheeeee
You don't have a clue what's happening, do you?
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?
The Dead Zones. Did you think this day wouldn't come? That there'd be no consequences to all your interference?
You locked us out, Spawn... for so long! That ruined EVERYTHING!
Letting Heaven and Clown ram their armies through them...!
And allowed a HAUNT inside!
You've BROKEN them, every damn Dead Zone. And now that someone sits on the throne, everyone's going to pay for what you did... including you.

The 'GREENWORLD' has taken over, because while you disappeared into Hell, the Dead Zones have been expanding AND expanding...
...and now they've grown large enough to cover your ENTIRE PLANET.
NEXT: EARTH PAYS THE PRICE FOR HELL'S NEW QUEEN

0:0:0:1

SPAWNING GROUND

PRESENTS: THANK YOU!

Here we are in a new year with a new Anniversary book of SPAWN that will lead to some new directions for some of our characters. And so, this issue marks an ending to a long unanswered question: "Who will sit upon Hell's Throne?"

That mystery has been around since the 100th issue of Spawn way back when. It was the last issue of one of the great runs on any comic title, by artist Greg Capullo, who was turning out some of the most majestic art I've seen in my career. I understand that may sound biased since this is, after all, my book... but I challenge anyone to find a longer run on a comic (Greg did about 80 issues) with as much quality as Greg delivered during that time (along with some stunning inks by Danny Miki).

But I digress...

Back in issue #100, the story revolved around Spawn beheading the lord of Hell who had given Al Simmons his Hellspawn powers and costume. But that rather savage death of Spawn's creator led to a vacuum of power in the various levels of Hell. So, the question that was always in the back of my mind was who would succeed the former master Malebolgia and take over the Throne of Hell? This issue gives you that answer.

And since it was recently found out the throne can multiply the power of whoever sits upon it, there became a frantic dash by some of this book's biggest characters to get there first. Because with the kind of power they would then wield, they could destroy every single one of their enemies... and for some, that includes God..!

But the second part of this issue's main story is that there will now be a "Cause and Effect" fallout, because the throne is no longer vacant. This 'effect' will be seen in our four ongoing monthly titles (SPAWN, GUNSLINGER, KING SPAWN, and the SCORCHED). Not all characters will be altered in the same manner, as that determination is based on many factors we will be unveiling in the coming months, but it will begin a path for the long-time fans as well as any newer readers.

Artistically, this issue also marks the introduction of pencil artist Brett Booth to the pages of Spawn. He and I had done a few years together on the Gunslinger title, so I know you will all be excited to see what he can deliver.

Also, in this book is a chapter by the regular artist of this book for the past four years, Carlo Barberi. He has put together one of the best runs on this title. Ever. Carlo will be joining me over on the Gunslinger title, so come take a look at what we have planned.

Lastly, I would like to thank our letterer, Tom Orzechowski, who has touched more pages of Spawn than anyone alive, including me! He has been with me since the very beginning, way back when in 1992, and I am so appreciative of the decades of work he has given me and this book. And this book would not be where it is without you great fans who have been so loyal through over three decades. Thank all of you so very much.

Do you have a question or comment about Spawn? If so, e-mail it to us at:
spawninggground@mcfarlane.com

SPAWN 350

BRETT BOOTH DETAIL GALLERY

Page 01 Pencils by Brett Booth

Page 10 Pencils by Brett Booth

Page 30 Pencils by Brett Booth

OUR BETRAYALS WRITE THEMSELVES IN OUR FLESH...

WHAT WILL SAVE MAIKA?

BLOOD · LOYALTY · LOVE

MONSTRESS™

THE POSSESSED

A NEW STORY ARC BEGINS IN ISSUE #49

FEBRUARY 2024

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